



Equity, Instruction and Leadership: The Central Role of Collective Efficacy

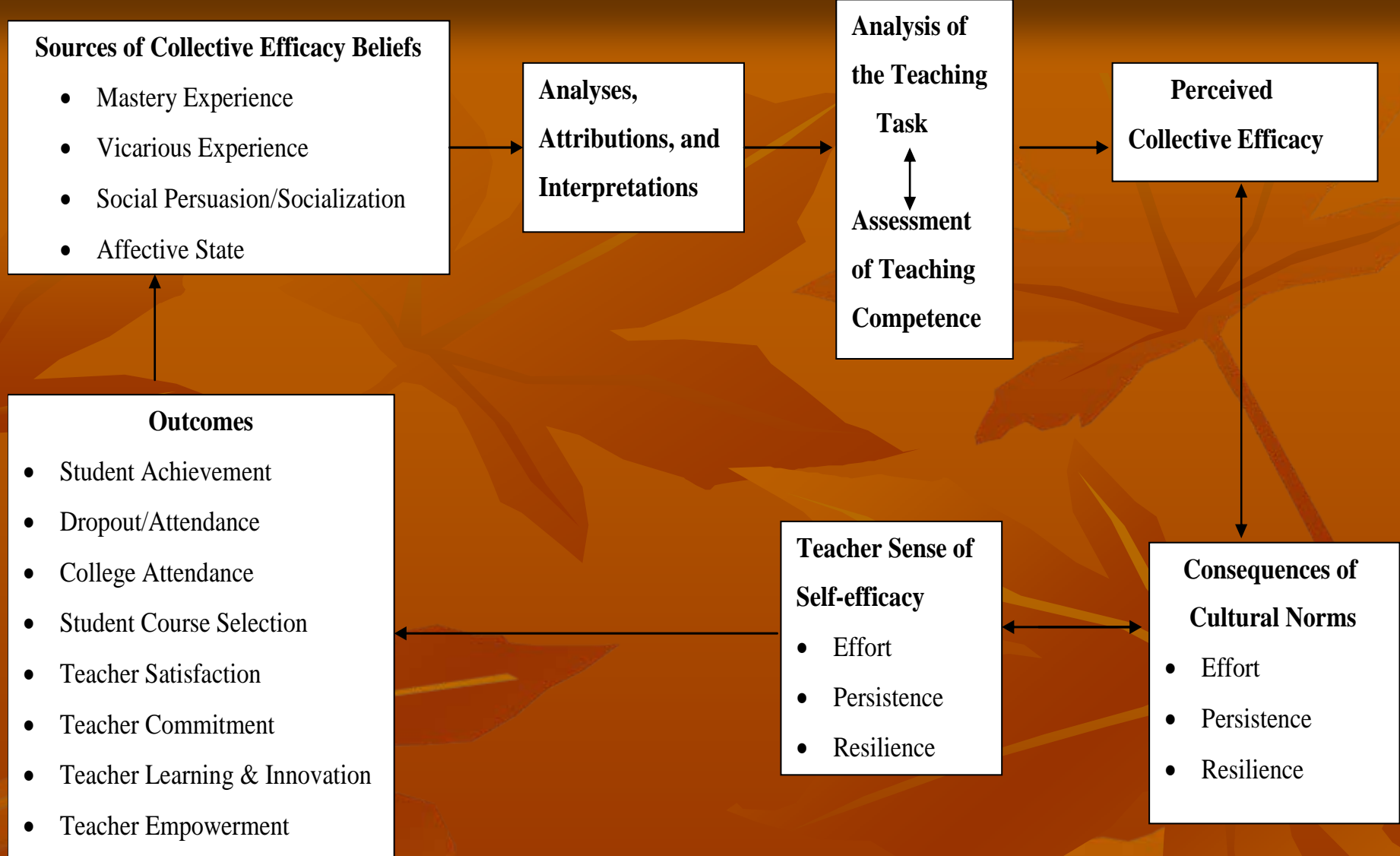
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Three Principles of Educational Improvement

- **Schools require a robust sense of collective efficacy to reach their full potential**
- **A robust sense of collective efficacy promotes effective instructional practice**
- **School leaders directly influence the level of collective efficacy present in their schools**

Presentation Purposes

- To explain why collective efficacy makes a unique contribution to school effectiveness.
- To examine the link between collective efficacy and educational equity.
- To understand the link between collective efficacy and instructional practice.
- To examine evidence indicating how school leaders promote collective efficacy.



Key assumption: Organizational agency

Social cognitive theoretical model of the formation, influence and change of perceived collective efficacy in schools.

Common Reciprocal Causality Concerns

- Because the model is cyclic, isn't collective efficacy just a function of prior achievement and social background? That is, isn't the argument really tautological?
- Don't we already know that teachers who serve advantaged students feel better about their ability to teach them? How does collective efficacy tell us anything we don't already know?

Some Responses to Assuming that Collective Efficacy is Exclusively a Function of Background

1. This amounts to deficit thinking.
2. This completely disregards the social cognitive theoretical argument that supports the important role of beliefs in group functioning.
3. This ignores the statistical controls in quasi-experimental studies employed to control for the problem that collective efficacy may not add anything to the prediction of achievement.
4. This ignores the results of studies that show differences among schools in collective efficacy *are partly independent of social background and prior achievement.*

How Does Collective Efficacy Relate to Equity?

- School accountability requires high levels of achievement for all students in all schools.
- Such ambitious goals are not possible without equity.
- The more a school faculty believes it can reach all students, the more likely it is to be successful in closing achievement gaps.

A Study of Collective Efficacy Beliefs and Equity

- The Context
 - Population – all the middle and elementary schools of a 52,500 student district in the Southwestern U.S.
 - 52% Hispanic, 34% Black
 - Achievement measures from 13,457 students in tested grades (3-8)
 - Collective efficacy estimated by 2041 teachers in 47 schools
- The Hypotheses
 - Collective efficacy is positively and significantly related to differences among schools in student mathematics achievement
 - Collective efficacy significantly attenuates the negative achievement effect associated with Black student status.

Findings: Perceived collective efficacy as a predictor of variation in mathematics achievement among schools (n= 13,457 students in 47 schools)

Variable	Coefficient	Std Error
Intercept	.236***	.057
Secondary school ^a	-.313	.194
Proportion students w/ socioeconomic disadvantage ^a	-.073	.046
Collective efficacy ^a	.095*	.039
African American ^b	-.076*	.034
Secondary school ^a	.072	.064
Proportion students w/ socioeconomic disadvantage ^a	.012	.019
Collective efficacy ^a	.038*	.018
Hispanic ^b	.016	.033
Low SES ^b	-.037**	.014
Prior achievement ^b	.331***	.024
Female ^b	.030*	.014
Special Education ^b	-1.321***	.161
ESL	-.251***	.062

*** p<.001

** p<.01

* p<.05

a School-level predictor

b Student-level predictor

Source: Skrla, L. & Goddard, R.D. A mixed methods investigation of the sources and effects of collective efficacy in a large urban school district: Implications for equity.

Revision requested from *American Journal of Education*

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On average, a school 1 SD above the mean in collective efficacy not only had higher achievement than a school with mean collective efficacy but also had a black-white achievement gap half the size.

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Study Implications

- When a faculty has a robust sense of collective efficacy some student subgroups may benefit by greater than average gains in achievement.
- It's important for school leaders to know how to build collective efficacy beliefs in their schools.
- Collective efficacy beliefs may be key to overcoming deficit thinking in schools.

Expanding Social Cognitive Explanations of the Effects of Collective Efficacy

- How does social cognitive theory explain the mechanisms through which collective efficacy has effects?
- Collective efficacy and teachers' instructional practice

Consideration of Effective Instructional Practice: A Focus on Differentiated Instruction

- Differentiation involves teachers' adjustment of task complexity, level of support (scaffolding), pacing, teaching methods and resources, activities, and student products to meet students' readiness levels, interests, and preferred learning modes.
- The core of what students learn is defined; it is the means by which they learn that differs.

A Study of Collective Efficacy Beliefs and Instructional Practice

- The Context
 - Population: The non-charter public elementary schools of Michigan
 - Sample: 76 elementary schools randomly selected and stratified by SES, location, prior achievement, and size.
- The Hypothesis
 - Differences among schools in teachers' reported use of differentiated instruction will be positively and significantly predicted by collective efficacy.

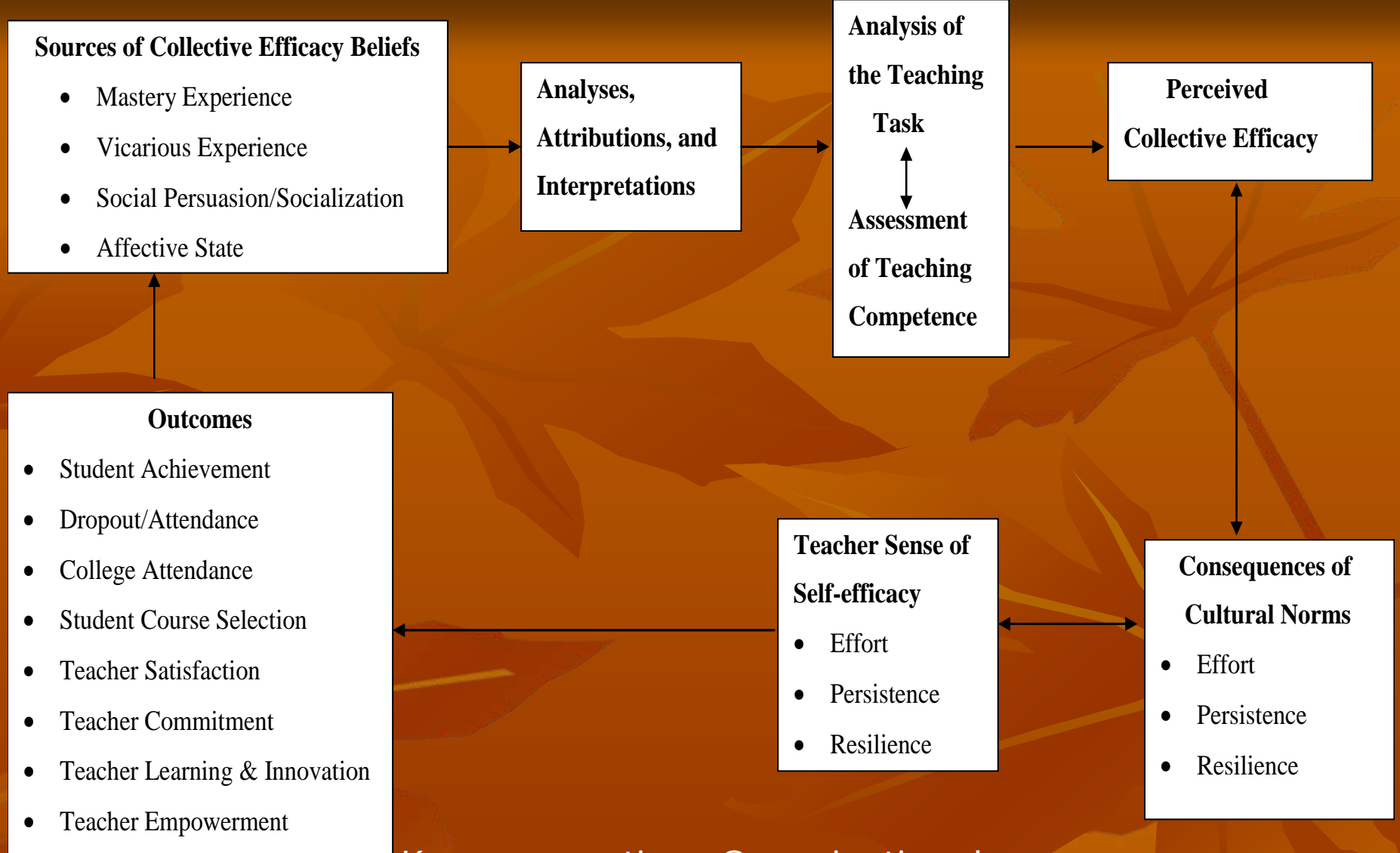
Results

- Differentiated instruction was significantly and positively related to collective efficacy.
- With controls for teacher demographic background and the inclusion of school controls for SES, proportion minority, size, past achievement and urbanicity, the relationship between differentiated instruction and perceived collective efficacy was positive and statistically significant (.13 SD).

Source: Goddard, Y. L. & Goddard, R.G. (2006) *Connecting teaching practice to school climate: An examination of the relationship between differentiated instructional practice and collective efficacy beliefs*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.

Given the Significance of Collective Efficacy, What Can Principals Do To Promote It?

- Social cognitive theory specifies 4 sources of efficacy belief-shaping information
- All can provide key ways for principals to influence a school's operative culture.



Social cognitive theoretical model of the formation, influence and change of perceived collective efficacy in schools.

The Relationship Between Collective Efficacy and Leadership According to Teachers

- 8 Schools scoring above and below the mean in collective efficacy from the Southwestern district described earlier
- Faculty focus group interviews that included questions about principal leadership
- Resulting text was coded and thematized utilizing FolioViews data management software

Principals Providing Vicarious Experiences that Develop Collective Efficacy

- “I think it was two years ago, when we first started the flexible grouping. I mean, they can do it all they want in district in-service, but until I got to go into another person’s classroom and see the kids actually do it and work and have time with that teacher and ask them questions, that’s what helped me. . . . I’d rather see a real teacher teaching than get a packet from someone standing and talking to me.”

Principals Leading in Ways that are Socially Persuasive and Efficacy Enhancing

- “We’re told it so many times, it’s just a part of life, we know that to work here you have to do whatever it takes to get the students to succeed. To reach our goal. And, you know, I believe there are enough teachers who have bought into that belief to where if you hear a teacher that may be not be quite there, I believe that by the time they hang around, either they will be there, or they’ll be out the door.”

Principals Influencing the Affective State of Schools

- “In general, I believe that how the principal feels the kids are going to do is how the teachers feel because it rubs off. I mean if the principal comes off as thinking, well this school has no hope, well then the teachers are like, “Well, if they believe that why should I try?” But if a principal comes and they’re positive and they’re like, “Well, listen, we’re going to do great,” then the teachers will try more and I think that just goes everywhere and it goes down the line.”

Principals Enhancing Collective Efficacy by Encouraging Teacher Input

- “I think what sets us apart is, to start with, our principal. And the fact that she believes in us, and gives us the space really to do what we need to do for student success. She trusts us to make decisions . . . because she knows that I also am for student success.”

Further Evidence of the Link Between Input and Collective Efficacy

- Why are collective efficacy levels linked to opportunities to have input?
- Quantitative study on the relationship between collective efficacy and teacher input in a large Midwestern urban school district.
- The higher the collective efficacy of a faculty, the more likely are members of the faculty to have influence over important school decisions. (.41 SD)

Source: Goddard, R.D. (2002). Collective efficacy and school organization: A multilevel analysis of teacher influence in schools. In Wayne K. Hoy and Cecil Miskel (Eds.). *Theory and Research in Educational Administration*, (Vol. 1), 169-184. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

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Summing Up

- Collective efficacy makes a unique contribution to school effectiveness and counters deficit thinking approaches.
- Collective efficacy supports accountability goals for equity.
- In addition to the general social cognitive explanations, it appears instructional practice varies with collective efficacy
- Teachers report that school principals can act in ways that promote collective efficacy as would be predicted by social cognitive theory.